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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

God our Father, we pause in the midst of the changes and challenges of life to receive a fresh experience of Your goodness. You are consistent; You constantly fulfill Your plans and purposes; and You are totally reliable. There is no shadow of turning with You; as You have been, You will be forever. All of Your attributes are summed up in Your goodness. It is the password for Your presence, the metonym for Your majesty, and the synonym for Your strength. Your goodness is generosity that You define. It is Your abundant, unqualified love poured out in graciousness and compassion. You are good when circumstances seem bad. When we ask for Your help, Your goodness can bring what is best out of the most complicated problems.

Thank You for Your goodness given so lavishly to our Nation throughout our history. Today, we turn again to You for Your guidance about what is good for our country. Keep us grounded in Your sovereignty, rooted in Your Commandments, and nurtured by the absolutes of Your truth and righteousness. May Your goodness always be the source of our Nation's greatness. In the Name of our Lord and Savior. Amen.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The able majority leader, Senator LOTT of Mississippi, is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, this morning, the Senate will immediately resume consideration of S. 1301, the Consumer Bankruptcy Protection Act. At

long last, I think we are going to be able to complete action on this legislation and get it into conference and give us a good opportunity then to get this work completed by the session's end.

It is expected that several amendments will be offered and debated this morning, with a stacked series of roll-call votes occurring at approximately 11:45 a.m. It looks like there will be two votes, probably, in that sequence, at 11:45. Those votes will hopefully include passage of bankruptcy legislation. Following disposition of that bill, the Senate may consider any other legislative or executive items cleared for action.

At this time, I believe we will probably go to the Internet taxation bill. Although we have had discussions with the Democratic leadership, no further agreements have been reached on other bills. I wanted to put the managers of that legislation, Internet taxation, on notice that we may very well go to that, which would be shortly in the afternoon.

From 10 until 11 o'clock, there will be a ceremony in the Rotunda where the Hon. Nelson Mandela will receive the Congressional Gold Medal. A number of Senators will be involved in that ceremony. We will continue to work on this bill, but we will defer votes until after that ceremony is over.

I yield the floor.

CONSUMER BANKRUPTCY REFORM ACT OF 1998

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BENNETT). Under the previous order, the Senate will now resume consideration of S. 1301, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1301) to amend title 11, United States Code, to provide for consumer bankruptcy protection, and for other purposes.

The Senate resumed consideration of the bill.

Pending:

Lott (for Grassley/Hatch) Amendment No. 3559, in the nature of a substitute.

Mr. DURBIN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois is recognized.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I thank the majority leader for announcing the schedule this morning. Those who have followed the last few days of Senate debate know we are considering a reform of the bankruptcy code. We will be joined shortly by the Senator from Connecticut, Senator DODD, who will offer an amendment.

For those who have not paid attention to this debate, I hope that they have followed at least the outline of it and understand that what we are about is to try to change the bankruptcy code in a way that will reduce abusive filings—in other words, people who may be going into bankruptcy court to file for bankruptcy in a situation where they can, in fact, pay back either their debts or a sizable portion of those debts. We have tried to address this at several different levels. We have had a spirited debate about how to do it.

We understand the complexity of this. Historically, there has been a national commission which has taken a look at this rather complicated area of the law. I find myself in an unusual position here, having worked with my staff and studied this issue for a year, because I come to this with an interesting experience when it comes to bankruptcy law. Thirty years ago, I took a course in bankruptcy in law school. Twenty years ago, I was appointed trustee of a bankruptcy in my hometown of Springfield, IL, in one case. Now I bring that wealth of experience to this debate in an attempt to try to find our way through a very complicated area of the law. It was interesting.

Yesterday, when I spoke to a colleague of mine about bankruptcy, she

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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